



Vance Green

Looking for a new career he could really love, Vance became a trainee at Trentham Gardens. Now he's a key part of the Trentham team, planting the garden's new meadows

PORTRAIT ANDREW MONTGOMERY

Earliest garden memory I can vividly remember observing my grandmother taking cuttings and potting them up in the shed while I watched on in amazement.

Is gardening a career change? My prior job was selling carpets and measuring up customers' houses – I always seemed to look in the garden and discuss the plants with the owners (I never told my boss that). When my eldest daughter was born I decided to change my career to horticulture. I wanted to show that a job is not just something that we have to endure, but can be something that you love doing.

Favourite garden It would have to be Trentham, I did my training here as part of the Historic and Botanic Garden Trainee Programme. I made good friends, learned worthwhile skills, as well as being inspired on a daily basis by world-class designers, such as 'Capability' Brown, Piet Oudolf, Tom Stuart-Smith and Nigel Dunnett.

Most valuable training My RHS qualifications are my most valuable training, giving me an in-depth knowledge of horticulture. Also the NPTC qualifications I have gained at Trentham and certificates gained with the help of the Professional Gardeners Trust.

Favourite planting style This would have to be Trentham's new woodland meadow, designed by Nigel Dunnett and created by the staff at Trentham. We will see the first full display from this spring.

Biggest challenge facing gardeners today Getting young people in the industry to become the head gardeners of the future. However, schemes such as the Historic and Botanic Garden Bursary Scheme give young people or career changers a chance to get paid while learning new skills in some of our most amazing gardens.

Favourite gardening blogs or books Keeping up to date with the latest horticultural news in industry magazines while reading articles on new gardens and relevant tasks for the time of year has become a favourite dinner-time routine. I can't think of many professions where staff read about the job on their break, but I guess that's what sets this industry apart from others.

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Trentham Gardens new meadows will be coming into their own this season. Details at trentham.co.uk. For more information about the Historic and Botanic Garden Trainee Programme, go to hbgtp.org.uk